

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 CU-04 HEW-04 CIAE-00
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CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PORG SEDU SREF WA BC ZA
SUBJ: NAMIBIA: ELEVEN SWANU STUDENTS READMITTED TO
NAMIBIA INSTITUTE

REF: 77 LUSAKA 3056

1. SUMMARY: MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE OF NAMIBIA INSTITUTE HAS
READMITTED 11 OF 23 SWANU STUDENTS WHO LEFT LAST YEAR. SWAPO
STUDENTS REPORTEDLY ARE NOT HAPPY ABOUT THE RETURN BUT HAVE
SAID THEY WILL NOT CAUSE TROUBLE. ATTEMPT WILL BE MADE TO RETURN
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REMAINING SWANU STUDENTS TO BOTSWANA. THE CAUSE OF THE PROBLEMS
AT THE INSTITUTE HAVE NOT BEEN REMOVED, HOWEVER, AND THERE
MAY BE MORE DIFFICULTIES AHEAD. END SUMMARY.

2. ELEVEN OF THE TWENTY-THREE SWANU STUDENTS WHO LEFT THE
NAMIBIA INSTITUTE IN OCTOBER FOLLOWING A DISPUTE WITH INSTITUTE
OFFICIALS (REFTEL) HAVE BEEN READMITTED. THE DECISION WAS

ANNOUNCED BY THE SENATE OF THE INSTITUTE ON JANUARY 17 FOLLOWING CONSIDERATION OF THE APPLICATIONS FOR READMISSION BY THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE ON JANUARY 12 AND 13. AN INSTITUTE SPOKESMAN SAID, "NOW THAT THE CASE HAS BEEN CLOSED, THE UN INSTITUTE FOR NAMIBIA WISHES TO BE LEFT UNHINDERED TO PURSUE THE AIMS FOR WHICH IT WAS ESTABLISHED, INSTEAD OF BEING DRAWN INTO A POLITICAL WRANGLE AT THE INSTIGATION OF A HANDFUL OF STUDENTS."

3. THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE'S CONSIDERATION OF THE SWANU STUDENTS' APPLICATIONS FOR READMISSION IS AN OUTGROWTH OF THE SENATE'S NOVEMBER DECISION THAT THE STUDENTS SHOULD BE ALLOWED TO REAPPLY AS INDIVIDUALS, AS LONG AS THEY UNDERTOOK TO ABIDE BY THE INSTITUTE'S RULES AND REGULATIONS AND DISASSOCIATED THEMSELVES FROM THE ACTIVITIES WHICH ORIGINALLY LED TO THEIR WITHDRAWAL FROM THE SCHOOL. THE SENATE DECISION SPECIFICALLY STATED THAT ACTUAL READMISSION WOULD "BE AT THE DISCRETION OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE."

4. INSTITUTE DIRECTOR (AND SWAPO CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEMBER) HAGE GEINGOB TOLD EMBOFF THAT FOUR OF THE 23 APPLICANTS WERE REJECTED OUT OF HAND BECAUSE THEY WERE THE "RINGLEADERS" OF THE INCIDENTS. THE REMAINING 19 STUDENTS WERE INTERVIEWED INDIVIDUALLY BY THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE, AND SEVEN WERE IMMEDIATELY APPROVED. THE COMMITTEE DECIDED TO REINTERVIEW THE 12 OTHERS. OF THESE, FOUR MORE STUDENTS WERE ACCEPTED, BUT THE FINAL EIGHT WERE REJECTED BECAUSE THEY REMAINED "UNCOMPROMISING."

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5. GEINGOB SAID HE WAS SURE THAT THESE EIGHT HAD BEEN GIVEN BAD ADVICE, "PROBABLY BY A STAFF MEMBER," AND APPARENTLY WERE UNDER THE IMPRESSION THAT THE COMMITTEE WAS UNDER AN OBLIGATION TO READMIT ALL THE SWANU STUDENTS. THIS WAS DESPITE THE FACT, HE SAID, THAT DURING THE INTERVIEWS IT WAS CLEARLY POINTED OUT THAT READMISSION WAS AT THE DISCRETION OF THE COMMITTEE.

6. ACCORDING TO GEINGOB, THE DELAY BETWEEN THD COMMITTEE MEETINGS AND THE OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENT WAS TO GIVE HIM TIME TO EXPLAIN THE SITUATION TO THE SWAPO STUDENTS AND TO URGE THEIR COOPERATION IN EASING THE RETURN OF THE SWANU MEMBERS. GEINGOB SAID THE SWAPO STUDENTS WERE NOT HAPPY ABOUT THE RETURN BUT HAD AGREED TO TREAT THE RETURNEES AS "FELLOW NAMIBIANS" AND TO MAKE A SERIOUS EFFORT "TO REPAIR THE DAMAGE." HE SAID HE EMPHASIZED THEY MUST KEEP IN MIND THE NEED FOR TRAINED MANPOWER FOR AN INDEPENDENT NAMIBIA.

7. INSTITUTE AUTHORITIES HAVE APPROACHED THE LOCAL OFFICE OF THE UNHCR TO ASK THAT IT TAKE OVER MAINTENANCE OF THE 12 STUDENTS WHO HAVE NOT BEEN READMITTED. THE INSTITUTE HAS BORNE THE EXPENSES FOR FOOD AND LODGING FOR THE 23 SINCE THEY WITHDREW

FROM THE INSTITUTE. GEINGOB SAID THAT THE INSTITUTE IS IN THE PROCESS OF REQUESTING THE ZAMBIAN GOVERNMENT TO APPROACH THE GOVERNMENT OF BOTSWANA REGARDING THE REPATRIATION OF THE REMAINING 12, ALL OF WHOM WERE ORIGINALLY RECRUITED FOR THE INSTITUTE FROM GABORONE.

8. COMMENT: WHILE ON THE ONE HAND, GEINGOB APPARENTLY IS RELIEVED THAT THERE ONCE AGAIN ARE SOME NON-SWAPO STUDENTS AT THE INSTITUTE, HE DID NOT APPEAR THRILLED AT THE WAY THIS HAS COME ABOUT. HE SEEMS TO EXPECT FURTHER DIFFICULTIES BETWEEN THE TWO GROUPS ALTHOUGH HE AND THE STAFF MEMBERS HAVE PLEDGED TO MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO REINTEGRATE THE SWANU STUDENTS AS SMOOTHLY AS POSSIBLE INTO THE INSTITUTE. THE BASIC FACTORS WHICH LED TO THE EARLIER PROBLEMS HAVE NOT BEEN RESOLVED, I.E., THE SWANU STUDENTS

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WILL STILL BE A SMALL MINORITY IN AN ESSENTIALLY SWAPO BODY AND TENSIONS ARE LIKELY TO CONTINUE. CLINGERMAN

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